

UFE 101Small Group DiscussionsOctober 1, 2024

Evicted
Poverty and Profit in the American City
Chapters 1 – 8

1. Should housing be a right in America?
2. “After paying \$550 in rent, Lamar had \$78 for the rest of the month. That amounted to \$2.19 a day” (page 25). How did Lamar manage to pay for utilities, household expenses, and food for himself and teenage sons on \$2.19 a day? What would you do if you disagree with what Lamar did to manage the dire financial situation?
3. See the bottom of page 50. Under welfare to work rules, Pam was working 30 hours a week to receive a monthly welfare check of \$673 and \$390 in food stamps. What happened to Pam when she needed a car repair? Why did Pam spend money on “dope”? Discuss your thoughts about substance use/abuse you’ve read about so far in the first 8 chapters. This is just one example...
4. Bottom of page 59: “Most poor people in America were like Arleen: they did not live in public housing or apartments subsidized by vouchers. Three in four families who qualified for assistance received nothing.” Discuss the process to get on the list for housing assistance.
5. Discuss the connections among evictions, substandard housing, the acceptance of landlords of renters being behind on rent, and policies in place to protect renters from substandard housing. Why don’t those policies work?
6. Discuss Sherrena. Is she a good or bad person?
7. Scott once rented nice apartments, was a nurse, loved his job, and one year made \$88,000. The Scott we meet in Chapter 7 is living in a trailer park, gets evicted, and has almost all his belongings stolen. What happened to Scott? How did he go from making \$88,000 a year to lugging his life around in a plastic container?
8. Page 97: “Tenants in eviction court were generally poor, and almost all of them (92 percent) had missed rent payment. The majority spent at least half their income on rent. One-third devoted at least 80 percent to it.” . . . “As usual, the courtroom was full of black women. In a typical month, 3 in 4 people in Milwaukee eviction court were black. Of those, 3 in 4 were women.” Discuss.
9. Page 99: “Patrice lived four miles away from the shore of Lake Michigan: an hour on foot, a half hour by bus, fifteen minutes by car. She had never been.” Discuss.
10. Other thoughts?